THE ANSWER

Of the Commission of the Generall Assemblie, to the Quaeree, Propounded to them, from the

PARLIAMENT.

WITH

AN ANSWER

Of the Commission of the Generall Assemblie, to a letter, sent to them, from the Ministers of the Presbyterie of Sterline.

ABERDENE.

Printed by James Brown, 1656.

PERTH, 14 December, 1650.
Ante meridiem.

Answer from the Commission of the *Generall Assemblie*, to the Quæree from the PARLIAMENT.

THE Commission of the Generall Assemblie, Having propounded unto them, from the Honourable Estates of Parliament, this Quæstion, *What persons are to be admitted to ryse in armes, and joyne with the forces of the kingdome, and in what capacitie, for defence thereof, againſt the armie of Sectaries, who (who contrary to the Solemn League and Covenant, and Treaties) have most unjustly invaded, and are destroying the kingdome?* Doeth humblie returne to their L. this Answer:

That,

That, considering it is a necessarie dueti incumbent to their L. both by the Law of GOD, and the law of nature, to vse all necessarie, and lawfull meanes, for the defence of the Libertie, Lyves, and Estates of the people of the Kingdome, agaynst the publick enemy, who hath most unjustly invaded us, and is destroying all these; And considering that the Forces formerlie raysed in this kingdom, are so ruined, and scattered, that there is not any considerable power of them remayning; And that the enemy hath now in his possession, and altogether under his power, a great part, and that the best part of the kingdom; And that there cannot possibly be raysed out of the rest of the Land, any competency of Forces, to oppose the enemy, either for preservation of these parts that are yet free, or for relief of these that are already subdued (as is represented by the Estates) unles there be a more generall calling foorth of the body of the people, then heretofore hath been; Therefore in this case, of so great, and evident necessity, we cannot be against the raising of all Fensible persons in the Land, and permitting them to fight against this enemy, for defence of the kingdom: Excepting such as are excommunicate, fofaulted, notoriously prophane, or flagitious, and such as have been from the beginning, and continue still, or are at this tyme, obstinate, and professed enemies, and opposers of the Covenant, & Cause of GOD: And for the capacity of acting, That the Estates of Parliamet ought to have, as we hope they will have, speciall care, that in this so generall concurrence of all the people of the kingdom, none be put in such trust or power, as may be prejudiciall to the Cause of GOD, And that such Officers as are of known integrity, and affection to the Cause, and particularly, such as have suffered in our former armies, may be taken speciall notice of.

A. Kr.

PERTH, 6 *January*, 1651.

The Answer of the Commission of the *Generall Assemblie*, to the * letter of the Ministers *of the Presbyterie of Sterline to them.*

**The printing of this letter, we thought might well be spared, because of the slownes of the Press here, and becaus it is alreadie printed at Edinburgh, and is now abroad in the hands of many.*

IN our letters, sent from our last meeting, to the severall Presbyteries of this Kirk, signifying to them, the resolutions of King, and Parliament, to call foorth the bodie of the people, throughout the parts of this kingdome, which are yet free from the oppression of the enemie, for the defence, and delyverance of the kingdome; and desyring all Ministers, in their places, and stations, to contribute their endevours, for advancing that work, and service: As we did then conceive, so do we still judge, that we did nothing, but what our duetie, in the trust committed to us, by the Generall Assemblie, for the good of the Kirk, and people of GOD, in this kingdome, oblieged us to doe; And that we requyred of Ministers, their concurrence, in such service, as the present condition of the kingdome, doeth requyre, and not onlie, the practise of all Christian Nations, but also, both the law of nature, and the Law of GOD, doeth allow, and approve,

approve; Expecting, that the Servants of GOD, out of their tender affection to the suffering, and bleeding condition of this Kirk, and kingdome, and respect to the lawfull commands of authoritie, should not been deficient to so necessarie, and pious a service: Or, that if anie should fynd matter of scruple, and doubt in the publick resolution, concerning that service, which might retard, or put them to a demurre therein, that they would have come, or sent some frō them, to communicate their doubts, and scruples, with us, that by conference thereupon, light might have been sought, for removing of mistakes, rather then, remayning at distance, without necessitie, sent their mynd, positivelie determining, contrary to the publick resolution in wryting, which, ordinarilie proves a snare, in matters of controversie, which is not easilie winne out of againe, men seldome comming off from that, which once they have in matters of that kynd, put pen to paper on: But no wayes expecting, that any brethren would have been so disrespective to the publick judicatorie of the Kirk, and so forward to vndoe peace, and union in the Kirk of GOD, as to goe up to Pulpits, and preach publicklie, agaynst the resolutions of the publick Iudicatorie, before they had recourse to themselves, to be informed of the grounds, and reasons of their resolutions, and to communicate anie doubts, themselves had upon the same, as to our great griefe, we heare some have done. This, as it is most disorderlie, and scandalous, so it cannot, but at this tyme, be most prejudiciall to the safetie of the Kirk, and kingdome, and advantagious to the designes of the publick enemie: And we expect, that Presbyteries, in their respective bounds, will take notice of what hath been done this way, and reprove it, so as the offence may be taken away, and the prejudice obviated, so farre as may be. As for satisfaction to anie doubts, that are brought agaynst the present publick resolution, in relation to acting agaynst the enemie, and reasons clearing it to be a duetie, allowed, and approven of GOD, albeit, as we have intimate before, this might have been more conve-

nientlie done in mutuall conference together, in the spirit of love, and meekeesse, then in the way, that is by some choſen: yet ſhall we not refuſe, even in this way, to hold forth to others, theſe grounds, wherewith we our ſelves were ſatisfied, and we judge, all in this Kirk, and kingdome, ought to be, and may be ſatisfied, as alſo to anſwer theſe contrarie reaſons, which have been brought, and we were not ignorant of, when we agreed upon that reſolution.

And firſt, we ſhall deſyre every one ſeriouſly to conſider the caſe and condition wherein the kingdome is engaged, & ſtandeth, at this tyme, that now, we are not upon an engagement of invaſive warre, but upon neceſſary defence againſt a forraigne enemy, who hath not only injuſtly invaded us, but alſo (through the holy permiſſive providence of GOD) ſlaine many of our Brethren with the ſword, ſubdued a great part of the Land, is oppreſſing the people of GOD therein, and following his injuſt deſignes, and intentions againſt the reſt of the kingdome, that in this caſe, in the ordinary way of providence, according to which men muſt act, unleſſe they would be guilty of tempting GOD, there is need, and ought to be employed againſt the enemy, ſuch a competency of power, as is requiſit, in right and warrantable prudencie, & may be had, not being of it ſelfe ſinfull: This certainly is mans duety, what ever GOD, out of His ſoveraignity, hath done, or may doe, in the caſe of want, or diſproportion of meanes: That in ſuch parts of the kingdome, as are yet free from the oppreſſion of the enemy, and ſo out of which any men can be raiſed, there is not a poſſibility, to get ſuch a competencie of power, unleſſe there be a more generall calling foorth of the body of the people, then hath been before, this as it is moſt certaine in it ſelfe, ſo it is moſt apparent, and evident unto all, that doe underſtand theſe parts of the kingdome, and whereas faithfull, and honeſt men in the State, well acquainted with the ſeverall ſhyres of that part of the kingdome, have publickly declared, that, when all ſhall be brought together, that can be called foorth of theſe parts, according to publick reſolution, will ſcarce be a competent power, againſt

the power

the power of the enemy, we cannot but much wonder, if any not so acquainted therewith, shall hold the contrary, and not give credit to the declaration of honest, and faithfull men, especiallie in authority, the matter being such, as in the immediat knowledge thereof, dependeth on sense, & as to these that have not that knowledge, pertaineth to humane faith, which giveth credit to the testimony *testium idoneorum*, of competent witnesses, such as these are whom we haue designed: So that the Brethren in their letter, whileas for asserting the exercising of their judgement anent this point, of the necessity of the kingdom, in a way of dissenting from the publick declaration, & testimony given thereanent, they doe alledge the practise of the Generall Assembly 1648, desiring the Parliament to satisfie, and cleare them in the lawfulnesse, and necessity of the warre, seeme not to argue to the purpose, becausse there the question was about a point *de jure*, here the question is about the existence of physicall meanes.

The case of the kingdom standing thus, the question is, whether it be a lawfull course or not, to raise all sensible persons, acknowledged subjects of the kingdom, according as is expressed in the publick resolution for defence, and deliverance of the kingdom, from the unjust violence & oppression of a forraigne enemy? We judge the course not only to be lawfull, but necessary duetie in the case, for these reasons: 1. Because it hath been through all generations, and is at this day, the universall, unconverted practise of all christian kingdoms, and States, in case of just defence, against forraign invasion, to employ all such as are acknowledged subjects, and citicens, in such a way, as is not evidently destructive to Religion, which practise, is also allowed, and approven by the judgement of the soundest Divines in the Protestant Kirks, as might be particularly instanced, if need were, in this paper. We doe not leane our faith, in matters of conscience, upon the practises, or testimonies of men, yet conceive, that so universall a practise, in a matter of conscience, uncontroverted, ought not to be misregarded, and seems is so farre from being so horrid a sinne, as some account it, that it

cannot want good & clear reason for it: And here we shal desire that the practise of our own first reformers of this Kirk, may be called to mynd, who did receiue sundry unto cõmunion of counsells, & acting with them, against the Queen Regents faction, who had been before upon her part and faction, opposing the Congregation, when as they came to acknowledgement of their former errours, & were willing to joyn with the Congregation, in the good cause. 2. As the law of nature binds & obliges every one, that is a member of the politicall body of a kingdom, or State, to endevour, to the uttermost of their power, the preservation of the whole, & of other fellow members, in a just quarrell, & cause, which if they refuse to doe, they are guilty of murther, and treachery against the Common-wealth: So the same law of nature allowes the body, & layes an obligation upon such, as are governours & rulers of that body, to call for the help and assistance of every member, as necessity requireth, for defence & deliverance of the body, from injust violence & destruction, which if they doe not, they run into the same guiltinesse, & betray their trust: Or, to make the matter more clear, take this formed argument: That which any is obliged to doe for anothers preservation, and cannot omit, without the guiltinesse of anothers destruction, that may the other lawfully requite of him, when he needeth it, and when it may be done by him, without the undoing of a greater good, then is the others preservation: But so it is, that every subject of the kingdom, is obliged by the law of nature, their oath of allegeance, their Covenants, the Law of GOD, to endevour, to the uttermost of their power, the preservation of the kingdom, against injust violẽce: Therefore their helpe may be lawfully called for by such as are in authority, for this end, whẽ the kingdoms preservatiõ stands in need of it, & their help tends not to the undoing of a greater good, thẽ is the preservation of the safety of the kingdom. But, to assume in way of prosyllogisme, the preservatiõ of the safety of the kingdom, at this tyme, against injust violence, stands in need of the help of many subjects, who haue been formerly debarred frõ rysing in arms, & their power may be employed for that end,

that end, without the undoing of a greater good, as shal be cleared afterward, in answering the objectiõs: Therfore, &c. 3. Whẽ we have, in the sincerity of our hearts, advised with the Word of GOD, we can find nothing therin contrary to the course, in the caseẅe have propoũded: And how could we find otherwise, seing the law of nature (which is comprehẽded in the Word of GOD, as a part of it) is so cleat for it? But we doe find in the Word, good and clear warrant for it: We shall not stay upon all which might be brought thence, but shall only point at one or two particulars, which speaking clearly to the point, may be sufficient to build faith vpon. 1. We find in the book of *Judges*, when, because of great defection from the purity of Religion, & the Covenãt of GOD in that ancient Kirk, they were broght under the oppresion of forraign enemies; yet, when as any governour was raised up by GOD, for their defence, & deliverãce frõ oppresion, & the people are raised, & gathered out for that end, we find them all called out promiscuously, not withstanding a great part of them, no question, had been in the defectiõ. And it cãnot be said, without grounldes rashnes, that al such had given convincing evidences of true repentance: Neither do we find that any of their governors are reproved, for not excluding such as had been in the defection, frõ rysing in arms, for the necessary defence & deliverance of the Land. But on the contrary, we find sad reproofs, & terrible curses, pronounced against thẽ, that came not out to the work; *Judg.* 5. v. 15. 16. 17. 23. And who will say, that there were none amongst these mentioned there, had been in the defection? 2. The like may be seen in the history of the *Kings* & *Chronicles*, that, when after a defection frõ Religion, & the Covenãt of GOD, gracious reforming kings arose, & had to doe against forraign invasion, we find not these kings debarring any subjects, but calling them out promiscuously, for the just & necessary defence of the kingdom: Neither do we ever find it laid to their charge, that they called out such, or such subjects, upon that service, though we may clearly perceive by the story, & sermons of the *Prophets* of the times, that in time of best kings, & best reformations, the greater part of the body of

the people were very wicked, & still retaining in their practise, much superstition: Instãces are well known to such as have any acquaintance in Scripture. 3. We find a very clear practise, stamped with divine approbation, and followed with the LORDS blessing making it successfull, speaking aboundantly to our point, 1. *Sam.* 11. Where, in the case of *Jabesh-gilead*, besieged by a forraign enemy, *Saul* cõmands all *Israel* to come forth, for the defence & delivery of their brethren, under pain of a severe civill censure: Wherein we desire these things to be considered. 1. That what *Saul* did in this busines, was by the motion of the Spirit of GOD, to wit, acting him to doe the duety of his Royall calling. 2. That what the people did in obedience to the command, they were also moved thereunto of GOD, by an impression of his fear, making thẽ, to wit, to reverẽce the authority of the king, called by him, & now acting his calling. 3. That in this acting, *Samuel* is cõcurring, & acting jointly with *Saul*, without making any opposition to the course that is taken. 4. As all the body of the people is cõmanded to rise, so all come forth as one man, & yet *Cap.* 10. *v. ult.* many amongst them (as is apparent a great faction) were sonnes of *Belial*, wicked & turbulent persons, who malignantly opposed the work, & clear revealed will of GOD, in calling *Saul* to the governement of his people. We desire that *Calvins* sermons on that chapter be read, wherein, amongst other things that make to our purpose, it will be found, that that learned, judicious, & pious writer, doth cõdemn thẽ citizens of *Jabesh-gilead*, of much sinfulnes, for that they were so soon ready to yeeld unto, & capitulat with the enemy, & did not first pray to GOD, and *call for the help of their brethrẽ*; the like whereof, we are sory, that the courses of some in this Land, at least in *the condition of the work*, leads unto, whileas the necessary help of fellow subjects against an invading & oppressing enemy, is not only not called for, but rejected, & opposed by them. 4. To reason in a more particular way to our case, in *hypothesi*, we desire it may be considered, that such as are excluded, who are a great part of the remnant of the Land, If not the greater part, if rules of exclusion, as they are urged in the letter, be extended, and applyed equally, & impartially, having their

lives, liberties, and estates allowed unto them, must either be in these things ensured (we mean in so farre as is competent to man to doe) by interposing a competent power, for their protection against the violence, or, if that cannot be given them, as certainly it cannot be given, as the condition of this Land now standeth, they must be allowed to act for their defence, *nam qui dat vitam, dat necessaria, & consequentia ad vitam*: Now how shall they act, and take up armes for their own defence, and the defence of the countrey, if they be not called thereunto, and allowed by authoritie? If it shall be said, that they may be permitted to act for their own defence, we repone, that must either be in a joint way with others in the Land, & if so, then the thing in question is granted upon the matter, but in a way disorderlie, and more dangerous, then that which is desired, and resolved upon: Or apart, and by themselves: Certainly that were a more ready way, as the condition of the Land now standeth, to expose both themselves, and others, and the whole Land, to ruine, and wee haue alreadie found too sad experience of acting this way.

We come now to answer the reasons, & objections, brought on the contrary; And first, we observe, that no testimonies or grounds of Scripture, are alledged in an head by themselves, against the resolution, to show that it is a course sinfull in it self: Only in the first branch of the second reason, some are pointed at, which were made use of *anno* 1648, against the associating with *Malignants*, in the engagement against *England*, and are alledged also to speak much against the present busines: But it is not sufficient to say, and dictat this, it ought to have been cleared, if it could been: But the cases are very much different, that was of an invasive warre, wherein an association with *Malignants*, notourly continuing in their *malignant* courses, and that without any necessity, there being sufficiency of honest men to have been employed, had the cause been good, this is of just and necessary defence, against forraign prevaling invasion, and oppression, wherein tho, none are to be employed, that continue in a course of *malignancie*: The places pointed at, may well

speak against that, but doe not reach this. We need say no more, unlesse there were some show of proofe to the contrary, yet we shall say somewhat particularly to one place, that which is said in the case of *Amaziahs* associating with, and taking to him the *Israelits*, for help in his just defence, 2. *Chron.* 25. 7. *O King, let not the army of Israel goe with thee, for the LORD is not with Israel, even with all the house of Ephraim*, as being mainly urged, and seems most to stick with some in the present businesse, to which sundry things may be answered, which clear the present businesse from the force thereof. 1. The *Israelits* were idolaters, and forrainers, not so in our case, in either respect: But it is alledged, that the reason why *Amaziah* is disswaded from taking their assistance, is, Because GOD was not with them, and therefore the same reason, having place in manie of these, whom the present resolution comprehendeth, the disswasion hath the same force against them. Therefore 2. GOD'S not being with them, may be either conceived and understood, in regard of the estate of grace, and reconciliation with GOD, but how-so-ever that with many of them GOD was not, in this regard, yet the reason cannot be alledged in this sense, because then it would follow by the argument, that we might not take the help of any man out of the estate of grace, for our just and necessary defence, which none will admit; or, it may be understood of GOD'S assistance, and prospering providence simply: But neither can it be taken thus, because it is certain and clear, that GOD was often with them in this sense, in their own cause and quarrells, therefore it must needs be conceived, in regard of their profession, and Religion, which was corrupt, and idolatrous, Now the reason thus understood, hath not place in our businesse. 3. Yet doe we not find, that *Amaziah* is commanded to exclude any of the subjects of his own kingdom, from acting in that defence, or reproved for not doing of it, notwithstanding many of them, no doubt, were naughty, and corrupt in their way, 2. *King.* 14. 4.

The first reason, is taken from the fourth article of the Covenant, that the resolution agreed upon, is inconsistent therewith,

with, the scope whereof, is alledged to be against the employment of such persons, because it byndeth to discover them, and bring them to condign punishment, which is a further degree of distance: To which we answer, No persons that are such, as are described in that article, are allowed to be employed, or, we hope, shall be employed: Or, if any such be employed, we think it our duety, to testifie against them, yet doe we not think, that were a sufficient ground or warrant, for any godly, and honest subject, to withdraw their concurrence, from defending their countrey, in a just cause, when called thereunto by lawfull authoritie: But, if any, who have been sometyme such, and having been censured, as hath been judged convenient by the supreme judicatories, or have been pardoned, doe now renounce, and engage themselves against such courses, by all the most solemn tyes, that can be imposed upon men, or not found notourly prophane, or flagitious, and are acknowledged members of State, and Kirk, be employed, according to clear bound duety, for the just and necessary defence of the kingdom, that article, to our capacitie, speaketh nothing against this.

To the second, Alledging the way that is taken, to be against former publick resolutions, declarations, our solemn engagement, &c. we shall not need to insist in following severally every branch thereof, because all of them may be cleared, by some common considerations. 1. Our first declarations, and publick resolutions, and engagements concerning this matter, were conceived in relation to acting, in a way of prosecution of the cause, and no wayes intended to the prejudice of just and necessarie defence of the kingdom, against forraign invasions, for which we are allowed and bound by the law of nature (which no humane lawes or resolutions can infringe or prejudge) to make use of all subjects in the kingdom, if the making use of them be not sinfull in it selfe, and may be without prejudice of the cause. And here, we desire it may be remembred, that in the beginning of these troubles, *anno* 1638, when as there were then standing lawes in this kingdom, which are not yet repealed to this day, discharging all

subjects

subjects from rysing in armes, without the kings expresse warrant and command: Yet the subjects of this kingdom, perceiving themselves in danger to be destroyed by forraign invasion, did fynd these lawes no wayes to bynd up their hands, from taking armes, for thier just defence, and selfe preservation, these lawes, in the intention of the law-giver, being made for the preservation of the kingdom, and not for the destruction of it: And accordingly, when the pacification was made at BERWICK, they refused to take a Pardon for what they had done, in taking armes, not only without, but againſt the kings command, alledging, and that truelie, that they had not broken the law, in regard they had but obeyed the law of nature, in a case of necessitie, in prejudice of which, these lawes could not be conceived to be made: And we conceive the verie same is applicable to our former resolutions, declarations, &c. in relation to our present case. 2. What is sayd in latter declarations concerning this matter, in relation even to defence agaynst our invaders, as it streatcheth further, then the declared intention of former resolutions, so it was in a tyme, when the whole kingdom was inteere, and there might be a choise made of instruments to act, and we confesse, in such a case choise should be made, of the best instruments, but now the case is altered. And as to the answer given by the Commission at STERLINE to the Quæree propounded by the Kings Majestie, about the end of September, the lyke may be sayd, there being then considerable forces gathered in the WEST, by whom much was expected, by honest people, and the remnants of the armie which were at STERLINE, and on this syde, together with such recruits as were then a levying, being joyned together, might have been a considerable power, to have opposed the enemie, without any urgent necessitie to employ others. Yet 3. neither at this tyme is it resolved that anie be employed, that are either knownly prophane, or continuing in enmitie and opposition to the Covenant, and cause of God.

To the third, Taken from the eminent danger, which is alledged will inevitable follow the way resolved upon, because these men,

these men, getting power into their hands, cannot but employ the same, according to their own principles, and for establishing their own ends, destructive to the Work of GOD, We answer, 1. Suppose there be some danger of this kynd, yet it is not certayn, and inevitable; And we desyre it may be considered, that on the other hand, if necessarie help, in it self not sinfull, be not employed, there is certayn ruine, both to kingdom, and cause, without an extraordinarie divine work, which we have no warrant to look for, neglecting ordinarie means: Let these two be weighed in the ballance, one agaynst another, and let warrantable Christian prudence judge, which of them were to be chosen. 2. We cannot see the danger unto the Cause of GOD, so apparent, and great, by this way of defence of the kingdom, Considering 1. That manie of these now to be employed therein, who have been debarred, were formerlie known active favourers, and promoters of the cause, and haue solemnlie declared their acknowledgement of the sinfulnesse of their fall from their steadfastnesse, and their sorrow for the same, and have bound themselves, to a more firm and faithfull adhering to the cause, and Covenant, by all the bands, that can be imposed upon men. 2. That none are to be employed, who are known to be still of a contrarie Mynd and affection. 3. That none, of whom there may be the least suspition this way are to get such power, or trust put in their hand, for defending the kingdome, as may be prejudiciall to the cause. 4. For preventing anie danger of this kynd, we resolve to have a particular oath, to be tendered unto, and taken by all, who are to be on the service, as full, and bynding, as possiblie men can conceive, to guard the cause of GOD, and work of reformation from all harm or prejudice. 5. The opposition that manie of these, who have been formerlie excluded, and now are to be admitted, did make to the cause of GOD, did aryse upon their sinfull preference of the kings intereſt, to the cause, which were then separated, and standing in opposition one to another: But now the intereſt of the king, and the cause, being joyned in one, and the king now having bound himself by Covt-

by Covenant, and oaths, solemnlie renewed, at his Coronation, to maintain the Covenant, and cause, there cannot be so evident danger apprehended that way.

To the fourth, Taken from scandall and offence of the godlie, It is answered, 1. The meanes resolved on, being not sinfull in it self, and being necessarie in the present case and condition of the Land, the offence and scandall cannot be GIVEN, but TAKEN: And therefore, 2. If anie godlie shall with-draw themselves, from contributing their necessarie concurrence, for the defence of the kingdom, they cannot but highlie sinne agaynst GOD, in deserting their necessarie duetie, and we doe wish, and hope, that there be no active instruments, to cause honest and godlie people in the Land to stumble, and offend more, then either they of themselves are inclyned to doe, or they can have occasion by the publick resolution. 3. Suppose the Magistrate should employ some persons whom he ought not, yet we doe not see, how that anie godlie ought, or could, without sinne, lye aback from concurring in the just defence of their countrey, in the necessitie thereof, and being called by lawfull authoritie.

To the fifth, Wherein it is sayd, That it seemeth to make voyd the strength of severall answers, given to the adversarie, alledging, our accession to the unlawfull engagement, and to promoting a malignant partie, and interest, and to contribute to the justifying of their quarrell, and to heighten them in their hopes, and resolutions agaynst this Land, It is answered, 1. It can no wayes favour anie alledgeance of the adversarie, of our accession to the unlawfull engagement, or promoting of anie malignant partie, or interest, seing none are to bee admitted, who have been accessorie to the engagement, but such, as have solemnlie, and publicklie renounced the same, and all courses tending thereto, and make declaration of their acknowledgement of the sinfulnesse, and unlawfulnesse thereof, doe engage themselves never to come anie way in opposition to the Covenant, and cause of GOD. 2. Wee see not how it can any way justifie their quarrell, & we wish that none amongst

our selves

our selves had given, or doe give them injustlie, pretences of justifying their quarrell. 3. We must not stand to make use of lawfull and necessarie meanes, for our just Defence, upon their conceiving groundles bigge hopes, and injust resolutions agaynst us.

To the sixth, What is alledged therein, is as easilie denyed as it is affirmed: And here we cannot but observe, that, which is generallie throughout this whole letter, that all, who have been hitherto debarred from acting, what ever they have been before, and what ever be their testimonies now of repentance, for anie sinfull course they have been upon, for a tyme, for which they have given satisfaction to the KIRK, are yet counted *Malignants*, which we cannot but think a verie hard, and uncharitable judgement, and the rather, remembring that in the Commission at STERLINE, after the Defeat, it was otherwyse publicklie acknowledged.

To the seventh, 1. We acknowledge, that we have cause to be affrayed of the LORDS indignation, and controversie agaynst the Land, both for the sinnes of such as are now to be employed, as also for the sinnes of others, as well as of them; but we see no cause to bee affrayed of GODS indignation, simplie upon this account, that necessarie meanes, allowed by the Law of GOD, and the law of nature, be made use of, for our just and necessarie defence: And as for that enemie, he is not onlie the Rod of GODS anger, and the Staffe in His Hand the LORDS indignation, agaynst *Malignants*; but also agaynst the whole Land, even the godlie themselves, as is at this day visible, in all the three kingdomes, because of our manyfold sinnes, hypocrisies, and disobedience to the Gospell of CHRIST; So, if this alledgeance have anie force to the poynt, for which it is brought, it should follow, that all and everie one of us should lye down, and doe nothing agaynst the enemy at all: Certainly, although *Ashur* was the Rod of GODS anger agaynst the hypocriticall nation of the IEWES, yet that was no argumēt why that people might not stand in their defence agaynst that enemie.

Whereas it is sayd, That the necessitie pleaded for the present resolution, doeth not cleare them in these thinges, because they remember in the year 1646. albeit the necessitie was pleaded by the COMMITTEE of ESTATES, for the capitulation with IAMES GRAHAME, and his adherents, yet that did not hinder the COMMISSION, to beare testimonie against the pardoning of them, which was much lesse then employing them, It is answered, 1. That the necessitie being cleare (as it hath been cleared in the present case) Pleadeth most stronglie for, and may cleare anie concerning the making use of meanes, in themselves lawfull, for just defence. 2. That necessitie, pleaded by the COMMITTEE of ESTATES, was meerelie pretended, they having then sufficiencie of power to have suppressed, and taken order with that enemie. What is alledged from the passages, and papers alreadie cited, as speaking agaynst the employing of them in our Armie, in the defence of the Kingdome; hath been alreadie sufficientlie answered. That which followeth, spoken agaynst unbeliefe, in case of the scarcenesse of meanes, &c. Wee acknowledge the Divine Trueth of that, that it is all one with GOD to save with manie, or with few, and that it is great sinne, to be misbelieving, when GOD in His Providence redacteth us to scarcetie of secundarie meanes, but that it is no ground for us, to neglect the use of lawfull, necessarie, and competent meanes, when GOD doeth afford them, such as He hath yet, Blessed be His Name, left unto us in this Land. But none of understanding, whom wee meet with, doe see, how these can be had, without such a calling forth of the people in these parts of the Land, that are yet free from the oppression of the enemie, as is held forth in the publick resolution, which being made use of, as they may be made use of, without such shares, dangers to the cause of GOD, and any given scandall, and just griefe to the godlie, as is pretended, what ever be the event thereupon, give us leave to say, will be more peace and comfort to us, then if anie further calamitie should come upon the Land, lawfull and necessarie meanes affoorded by providence,

not having

not having been made use of. What followeth here-after, hath been answered before, untill it come to these wordes, *But wee cannot conceave how the Kingdome and Cause can bee well separated*, &c. Wherein, give us leave to say, without offence, great injurie is done the COMMISSION of the KIRK, in that resolution, whileas it is alledged, that therein we doe separate the kingdome, from the Cause, as we were going contrarie to the mynd and course of this KIRK and Kingdome, these twelve yeares past, which never separated them, and were homologating with such, as being adversaries, and undermyners of the Cause, have endevoured to put Religion out of the quarrell. Doeth our mentioning onlie the kingdome in that resolution, import a separation of the kingdome, and the Cause, in the quarrell agaynst our enemie? Or what Logick can draw out such a consequence out of it? Wee doe think, that the kingdome being in danger by this enemie, the Cause also is in danger, and the defending of the kingdome, will be the defending of the Cause also: And wee trust no instruments shall bee employed for the defence of the kingdome, to the prejudice of the Cause: So that wee see not that much advantage is by that resolution given to the enemie; and wee wonder how it can bee sayd, to bee inductive to others, to comply with them, to the prejudice of the kingdome, as being of lesse value and importance, then the Cause, except these others, be such, as have cast off naturall affection to their native kingdome, or judge these who are present enemies to the kingdome, not to bee enemies to the Cause.

A. Ker.

PERTH MARCH 13. 1651.

THe Letter of the Ministers of the Presbyterie of Stirling is not here printed as was intended, The same being already printed at Edinburgh, under the false and odious title of A Remonstrance of the Presbytery of Stirling against the present conjunction with the Malignant partie, *and spread throughout the Kingdom by what meanes and warrand it's not known.*

A. Ker.